

David A Fabrycky 03/08/2009 01:26:46 PM From DB/Inbox: PE

Cable
Text:

UNCLAS DOHA 00133
CXDOHA:

ACTION: PAO
INFO: AMB P/E DCM

DISSEMINATION: PAO /10
CHARGE: PROG

APPROVED: AMB:JELEBARON
DRAFTED: PAO:JHOOD; SPG:KYAI
CLEARED: DCM:MRATNEY

VZCZCDOI446
PP RUEHC RUEHEE RUCNFUR
DE RUEHDO #0133/01 0501045
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 191045Z FEB 09
FM AMEMBASSY DOHA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8777
RUEHEE/ARAB LEAGUE COLLECTIVE
RUCNFUR/DARFUR COLLECTIVE

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 DOHA 000133

SENSITIVE

FOR AF/SPG AND NEA/ARP

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: PREL SU QA
SUBJECT: DOHA DARFUR CONSULTATIONS: AGREEMENT OF GOODWILL SIGNED

(SBU) KEY POINTS

-- (SBU) On February 17, representatives of Sudan's Government of National Unity (GNU) and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) signed an "Agreement of Goodwill and Confidence Building for the Settlement of the Problem in Darfur."

-- (SBU) The agreement (text at para 11) calls for an exchange of prisoners; for guaranteeing the flow of humanitarian assistance; and for working toward a framework agreement within three months.

-- (SBU) AU/UN Joint Mediator Djibril Bassole and Qatari Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Hamad bin Jassim Al Thani announced at a press conference that they would soon travel to Khartoum to work out a timeframe for next steps. JEM leader Khalil Ibrahim announced that he would unilaterally release a number of prisoners as a goodwill gesture.

-- (SBU) Both delegations agreed to maintain representatives in Doha to continue discussions. Mediator Bassole intends to convene a Contact Group meeting in Brussels in early March.

-- (SBU) Qatari Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Ahmed bin Abdullah al-Mahmoud and Bassole expected that an announcement by the International Criminal Court of an arrest warrant for Sudanese President Bashir could dampen the GNU's interest in pursuing an agreement, but reiterated Qatar's commitment to the peace process no matter the ICC's verdict.

-- (SBU) Qatar is committed to reconstruction in Darfur, but as a bottom-up process. Al-Mahmoud and Bassole will look for ways to engage civil society organizations in the peace consultations, as well as post-agreement reconstruction.

END KEY POINTS

A STATEMENT OF INTENTIONS

¶11. (U) Sudanese Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports, Dr. Amin Hassan Omer, and JEM representative Jibril Ibrahim signed an "Agreement of Goodwill and Confidence Building for the Settlement of the Problem in Darfur" in Doha on February 17 at the Amiri Diwan. The signing was witnessed by representatives of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council (P5) and the Qatari Foreign Minister/Prime Minister.

¶12. (U) The agreement stipulates that both sides agree to refrain from harassing internally displaced people; guarantee the flow of aid; work toward a framework agreement that leads to a cessation of hostilities in under three months; and exchange prisoners based on a timeline to be developed by Mediator Bassole.

¶13. (U) At the signing ceremony press conference, Bassole and the Qatari Prime Minister announced that they would soon travel to Khartoum to help work out the timeline for prisoner exchanges and other next steps. JEM's Khalil Ibrahim announced that he would unilaterally release a number of prisoners as a goodwill gesture.

BASSOLE AND AL-MAHMOUD: WHAT NEXT?

¶14. (SBU) After the signing ceremony, Qatar's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Abdullah al-Mahmoud met with P5 representatives, and thanked them for their support and advice during the consultations, which he said was vital to the success of "round one." He encouraged the P5 to issue individual statements of support, as it would encourage those who remain outside the process to join in.

¶15. (SBU) Al-Mahmoud and Bassole stressed the need for an inclusive process and that the parties have agreed to this in principle, even though it was not spelled out in the agreement itself. The mediators explained that they preferred to leave it out of the text to prevent either party from believing it had a veto over if/ who participates in the peace process. Al-Mahmoud and Bassole said they would now start an intensive engagement with other actors.

¶16. (SBU) JEM and GNU will leave some delegation members in Doha to continue consultations and prepare for the final talks on a draft framework agreement. Bassole felt the confidence building measure agreement was good, but that the most difficult task was yet to come. The first issue is the need to create a good environment that "could bring in others who continue to resist."

¶17. (SBU) Bassole also underscored the importance of normalizing relations between Chad and Sudan, and engaging with Libya, Egypt, and Eritrea for their constructive involvement and support for the Qatari/AU/UN mediation efforts. He suggested working with these countries to get them to a stage where "they speak with one voice during the final talks." Bassole said he planned to visit each country soon, but did not specify a timeline. He also pledged to call a Contact Group meeting in Brussels by mid-March.

POSSIBLE ICC IMPACT

¶18. (SBU) Asked what impact an ICC announcement might have on the process begun in Doha, both al-Mahmoud and Bassole emphasized that they intended to continue their mediation efforts, but feared that the rebels could refuse to join talks and the government may no longer see the benefit of talks if an arrest warrant were issued. Bassole surmised that JEM refused to sign a cessation of hostilities agreement because they are waiting for the announcement. Though an announcement of the ICC could create some uncertainty, said Bassole, it should not detract the mediators from their focus.

¶19. (SBU) Al-Mahmoud opined that peace is more of a priority for Darfuris than justice. The Qatars are committed to move forward to conclude a comprehensive agreement, but al-Mahmoud said he wanted the ICC judges to think about the people of Darfur and the impact an announcement could have on their lives. Ultimately, however, Qatar will respect the ICC's verdict.

RECONSTRUCTION AND PEACE FROM THE GROUND UP

¶10. (SBU) The Minister of State said that Qatar would like to engage in reconstruction in Darfur after a peace agreement is concluded, but believes that any successful project needs to start from the grassroots, so a bottom-up approach is indispensable to the peace process. He and Bassole are discussing how to engage civil society, to inform them of what has been done so far and what the next steps are.

AGREEMENT TEXT

¶11. (U) Begin text of the "Agreement of Goodwill and Confidence Building for the Settlement of the Problem in Darfur:"

In the name of God, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful

AGREEMENT OF GOOD WILL AND CONFIDENCE BUILDING FOR THE SETTLEMENT OF THE PROBLEM IN DARFUR

Under the kind auspices of the State of Qatar and the AU-UN Joint Chief Mediator for Darfur, a meeting was convened from 10th to 17th of February 2009 in Doha, capital of the State of Qatar between a delegation from the Government of National Unity of the Republic of Sudan (GNU) and a delegation from the Justice and Equality Movement Sudan (JEM) to pursue a negotiated peaceful settlement for the Sudan conflict in Darfur.

The two Parties hereby:

Firstly: Highly appreciate the role of the State of Qatar as the Host Country and agree upon Doha as the venue for the talks between them.

Secondly: Appreciate the kind auspices of H.H. Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani, Emir of the State of Qatar and the mediation by the esteemed Government of the State of Qatar and the AU-UN Joint Chief Mediator, Mr. Djibrill Bassole;

Thirdly: Recognize the constructive support to the peace process provided by neighboring countries and the international community.

Fourthly: Declare their intent to work towards ending the ongoing conflict between them, as follows:

Give the peace process a strategic priority over other issues to settle the conflict in Darfur.

Agree to adopt a comprehensive approach which addresses the root-causes of the problem and realizes a lasting peace in the country.

Agree to take all necessary measures to create a conducive environment for reaching a lasting settlement of the conflict, including:

Refrain from all kinds of harassment of IDPs.

Guarantee the smooth and unobstructed flow of relief assistance to the needy people without any obstacles or constraints.

Commit to exchange prisoners and release imprisoned, convicted, detained and arrested persons in relation to the conflict between them with a view to building confidence and accelerating the peace process. The state of Qatar and the AU-UN Joint Chief Mediator will maintain contacts with both parties to work out a time-line for concluding the release of the above-mentioned.

Work towards an early framework agreement that leads to cessation of hostilities and lay down the basis for detailed issues.

Undertake to follow the framework agreement with serious talks to end the conflict in the shortest possible time, not to exceed three months.

Pledge to remain engaged in the peace process and to maintain representatives in Doha to prepare a framework agreement to the final talks.

Done in three languages, in Arabic, English and French, all texts are equally authentic.

Signed in Doha on 17th February 2009

For the Sudan Government of National Unity
Dr. Amin Hassan Omer, Minister of State, Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports

For the Justice and Equality Movement
Dr. Gebreil Ibrahim Mohamed, Head of the JEM delegation to the Doha talks

Witnessed by:

Ahmed bin Abdulla Al-Mahmoud
Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and Member of the Cabinet,
State of Qatar

Djibrill Yipene Bassole
AU-UN Joint Chief Mediator for Darfur

END AGREEMENT TEXT

LEBARON